

May 3, 2011

To the Editor:

We are past Presidents and leaders of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the largest and oldest rabbinical organization in the world. We are ardent Zionists, deeply committed to a Jewish democratic State of Israel in secure and recognized borders. Some of us identify ourselves with J Street, others with AIPAC and others with neither. However, one should not doubt the firm commitment of each of us to the welfare of the Jewish State and Jewish people. In that respect, we are typical of the broad spectrum of pro-Israel involvements that characterize the Reform movement.

We enthusiastically support the choice of Rabbi Richard Jacobs to succeed Rabbi Eric Yoffie as President of the Union for Reform Judaism and are deeply dismayed at the unwarranted attacks that have been leveled against him. Like Rabbis Yoffie and Schindler before him, Rabbi Jacobs has made the welfare, security and democratic character of Israel a prime focus of his rabbinate. He is an *Ohev Yisrael* (a lover of Israel) of the first order.

What we need today are Jewish leaders in Israel and North America who will not hesitate to struggle with the difficult questions of peacemaking and human rights, while firmly committed to the security of Israel. Rick Jacobs is such a leader. Rabbi Jacobs speaks his mind independently and with unswerving integrity.

Rabbi Jacobs has had an incredibly successful career as a congregational rabbi, national leader and innovator. At this challenging moment in Jewish history we look forward to his transformational leadership. We fully support him and congratulate the leadership of the Union for Reform Judaism who selected him.

Rabbi Steven A. Fox, CCAR Chief Executive
Rabbi Jonathan Stein, CCAR President, 2011-2013
Rabbi Ellen Weinberg Dreyfus, CCAR President, 2009-2011
Rabbi Peter Knobel, CCAR President, 2007-2009
Rabbi Harry Danziger, CCAR President, 2005-2007
Rabbi Janet Marder, CCAR President, 2003-2005
Rabbi Martin Weiner, CCAR President, 2001-2003
Rabbi Charles A. Krolloff, CCAR President, 1999-2001

Rabbi Richard N. Levy, CCAR President, 1997-1999
Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin, CCAR President, 1995-1997
Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, CCAR President, 1993-1995
Rabbi Walter Jacob, CCAR President, 1991-1993
Rabbi Samuel E. Karff, CCAR President, 1989-1991
Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman, CCAR President, 1981-1983
Rabbi Donald Berlin, Past Chair, CCAR/URJ/HUC Joint Commission on Rabbinical Placement
Rabbi Deborah Prinz, CCAR Director of Program and Member Services
Rabbi Hara Person, CCAR Publisher and Director of Press
Rabbi Lennard R. Thal, CCAR Interim Director of Rabbinic Placement